

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

ACDA-19 AID-20 OMB-01 NIC-01 EB-11 CU-04 TRSE-00

DRC-01 /170 W

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P 041310Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6348

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION USUN

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

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CINCUSARPAC

DIA WASHDC
CGFMFPAC
CGUSARSUPTHAI
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COMSEVENTHFLT
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COMUSSAG
III MAF
CINCPACAF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 7616

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MOPS, ECON, CB
SUBJ: KHMER REPORT - JUNE 4

GENERAL

1. THE PROTESTS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAME TO A SUDDEN AND TRAGIC CULMINATION ON JUNE 4 WITH THE FATAL SHOOTINGS OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND A PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR. THE TWO WERE BEING HELD AS HOSTAGES BY DEMONSTRATING STUDENTS IN A PHNOM PENH LYCEE WHEN THEY WERE KILLED. THE CIRCUMSTANCES BEHIND THE DEATHS OF THE TWO OFFICIALS ARE NOT YET CLEAR BUT EITHER THEIR STUDENT CAPTORS OR COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS WOULD APPEAR RESPONSIBLE. ON THE MILITARY SIDE, FANK CONTINUED ITS SUCCESSFUL DEFENSIVE EFFORTS AROUND KOMPONG THOM, PREY VENG AND OTHER ENCLAVES, AND ITS FORCES MADE SOME PROGRESS NORTHWARD ON ROUTE 5. MORE FANK NAVAL CONVOYS WERE ABLE TO TRAVERSE THE RECENTLY REOPENED TONLE SAP. THE ENEMY, HOWEVER, EXERTED HEAVY PRESSURE AGAINST KOMPONG SEILA ON ROUTE 4 AND IN THE BASSAC-MEKONG AREA SOUTH OF PHNOM PENH. SOME NVA/VC TROOPS HAVE BEEN REPORTED OPERATING AROUND SVAY RIENG. KHIEU SAMPHAN RECEIVED SOME STRONG WORDS OF SUPPORT FROM HIS NORTH VIETNAMESE HOSTS AND REITERATED GRUNK'S DETERMINATION TO PRESS ON TO TOTAL VICTORY WITHOUT COMPROMISE.

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)
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2. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF SMALL SCALE DEMONSTRATIONS AND MARCHES BY PROTESTING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, EVENTS TOOK A TRAGIC TURN ON JUNE 4 WITH THE FATAL SHOOTING OF TWO HIGH-RANKING GKR OFFICIALS. THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION KEO SANGKIM AND PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR THACH CHIA WERE TAKEN FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BY STUDENT PROTESTERS. ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 4 AND MARCHED TO A PHNOM PENH LYCEE WHERE THEY WERE HELD AS HOSTAGES BY THE STUDENTS.

THE DEMONSTRATORS DEMANDED AT AN AFTERNOON PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE NINE PRISONERS STILL BEING HELD BY THE GKR FROM AMONG THE 60-ODD ARRESTED PREVIOUSLY (SEE LAST WEEK'S KHMER REPORT) BE RELEASED IN RETURN FOR THE TWO OFFICIALS.

3. THE TWO MEN WERE KILLED AS NATIONAL GENDARMERIE TROOPS ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE LYCEE TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE. THEY WERE FOUND SHOT AND POSSIBLY STABBED NEAR A DOORWAY OF AN UPSTAIRS ROOM IN THE LYCEE. BY NIGHTFALL, THE CROWD THAT HAD GATHERED AROUND THE LYCEE HAD BEEN LARGELY DISPERSED. REPORTEDLY SOME STUDENTS ARE STILL TAKING REFUGE IN THE LYCEE WITH SEVERAL CARBINES; THE POLICE HAVE DETAINED MANY STUDENTS AND THE ARRESTS ARE CONTINUING. STUDENTS APPARENTLY HAVE HAD AT LEAST HALF A DOZEN CASUALTIES WITH SOME REPORTEDLY KILLED. CURFEW HAD BEEN ADVANCED TO 1830 HOURS.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EXACT CIRCUMSTANCES OF THESE OFFICIALS' DEATHS ARE NOT YET CLEAR, THEY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN KILLED BY SECURITY FORCES AND SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SHOT BY THEIR STUDENT CAPTORS OR COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS FROM WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE BUILDING IN WHICH THEY WERE HELD. STUDENT PROTESTORS ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE, OF COURSE, FOR THIS TRAGIC EVENT, WHICH PROBABLY DO DAMAGE TO THEIR CAUSE.

5. AFTER A MARATHON INTERPELLATION OF THE PM AND SOME OF HIS MINISTERS, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON MAY 30 PASSED A "DECISION" CRITICIZING THE GOVERNMENT BUT STOPPED SHORT OF FORMALLY WITHDRAWING CONFIDENCE. THE DECISION CHARGED GOVERNMENT INCOMPETENCE AND IMPLIED CABINET LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE CONSTITUTION. IT WAS AIMED MAINLY AT RIVAL REPUBLICAN PARTY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT WHO HAVE REFUSED TO UNDERGO INTERPELLATION BY THE ASSEMBLY. COMMENT: THE DECISION, WHICH LOST MUCH OF ITS IMPACT BECAUSE LESS THAN ONE-FOURTH OF THE ASSEMBLY WERE PRESENT FOR THE VOTE
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APPEARED TO BE PART OF A MAJOR EFFORT BY LEADING LIGHTS OF THE RULING SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY TO OUST PM LONG BORET ON BEHALF OF ASSEMBLY VIC-PRESIDENT PAN SOTHI. MOST DEPUTIES SEEM TO HAVE HEEDED PRESIDENT LON NOL'S WARNING THAT MINISTERIAL CHANGES WOULD ONLY INCREASE THE NATION'S DIFFICULTIES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

6. THE SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY'S PHNOM PENH BRANCH, MEETING TO PICK NEW OFFICERS, VOTED ON JUNE 2 A SIX-POINT DECISION ASKING INTER ALIA THAT PRESIDENT LON NOL AUTHORIZE HIS BROTHER LON NON'S RETURN TO "CONSOLIDATE THE PARTY AND SERVE HIS COUNTRY IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES." THE DECISION ALSO "FORBODE" MEMBERS OF THE PARTY'S NATIONAL CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO SERVE IN THE CABINET. COMMENT: THE PHNOM PENH BRANCH OF THE SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY WAS DECISIVELY DEFEATED IN ITS EFFORTS TO INSTALL A LON NON

ORIENTED SLATE IN THE JANUARY PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE ELECTIONS AND IS NOW SHOWING ITS PIQUE AT THE DEFEAT.

7. PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET GAVE A LONG, BALANCED PRESENTATION OF THE MILITARY SITUATION IN A MAY 31 PRESS CONFERENCE.

POLITICAL (EXTERNAL)

8. FOREIGN MINISTER KEUKY LIM RETURNED TO PHNOM PENH ON MAY 28 AFTER A STAY IN NEW YORK DURING THE UNGA SPECIAL SESSION AND A VISIT TO SEVERAL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

9. FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER KOUN WICK IS THE NEW GKR AMBASSADOR IN TOKYO, REPLACING SIM VAR WHO RESIGNED IN MARCH.

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AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
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CINCUSARPAC
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COMUSSAG
III MAF
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GRUNK/FUNK

10. KHIEU SAMPHAN AND HIS DELEGATION, ON THEIR WAY BACK TO CAMBODIA, RECEIVED MORE WORDS OF SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. AT A DINNER HE HOSTED FOR THE GRUNK DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, PHAM VAN DONG REAFFIRMED THE NORTH VIETNAMESE "UNSHAKEABLE DETERMINATION" TO PROVIDE "OUR VIGOROUS AND TOTAL SUPPORT TO THE FRATERNAL CAMBODIAN PEOPLE'S JUST AND CERTAINLY VICTORIOUS STRUGGLE". KHIEU SAMPHAN SAID THAT THE COUNTRIESJUST VISITED SUPPORT THE GRUNK "RESOLUTE STAND OF UNCOMPROMISING STRUGGLE WITHOUT RETREAT UNTIL TOTAL VICTORY", AND WENT ON TO CLAIM THAT THIS "CONSTITUTES A VIGOROUS BLOW THAT HAS SMASHED THE ENEMY'S DECEITFUL SCHEME CONCERNING THE HOLDING OF SO-CALLED SECRET NEGOTIATIONS".

11. GRUNK, APPARENTLY ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM CREATED BY THE KHIEU SAMPHAN TRIP, HAS DISPATCHED ANOTHER

DELEGATION, LED BY FOREIGN MINISTER SARIN CHHAK, TO SOMALIA.
THE DELEGATION, LED BY FOREIGN MINISTER SARIN CHHAK, TO SOMALIA.
THE DELEGATION ARRIVED JUNE 2 TO BE GREETED BY VARIOUS
SOMALIAN OFFICIALS AS WELL AS THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR.

ECONOMIC

12. DURING THE PAST WEEK PRICES IN PHNOM PENH REMAINED
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RELATIVELY STABLE. BEEF AND PORK PRICES WERE UNCHANGED.
THE PRICES OF SOME VEGETABLES INCREASED OVER THE PRE-
VIOUS WEEK, BUT FRESH WATER AND OCEAN FISH, AS WELL AS
OTHER SEAFOOD, DECLINED IN COST. THE DECREASE IN THE
PRICES OF FRESH WATER FISH IS PROBABLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO
THE SEASONAL MIGRATION OF FISH PASSING BY PHNOM PENH EN
ROUTE TO THE TONLE SAP, WHILE REDUCTIONS FOR OTHER SEA-
FOOD MAY BE A RESULT OF A GREATER AVAILABILITY
OF AVGAS FOR DOMESTIC AIR CARRIERS. THE OFFICIAL EXCHANGE
RATE REMAINED AT 420 RIELS TO THE DOLLAR WHILE THE
BLACK MARKET RATE INCREASED FROM 780 TO 800 RIELS.

13. IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE DOMESTIC MOVEMENT OF COM-
MODITIES A CHARTERED COASTAL SERVICE WAS INAUGURATED THIS
WEEK IN KOMPONG SOM WHERE APPROXIMATELY 1.930 MTS OF BADLY
NEEDED SUPPLIES SUCH AS LUMBER, SALT, CHARCOAL, IRON
SHEETS AND NEWSPAPERS WERE LOADED FOR THE NEXT MEKONG
CONVOY. TWO OTHER COASTERS HAVE BEEN CHARTERED FOR A
KOMPONG SOM TO PHNOM PENH RUN AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOW UNDER-
WAY IN SAIGON TO CHARTER ADDITIONAL BARGES AND TUGS FOR
THE KOMPONG CHHNANG TO PHNOM PENH CONVOY RUN VIA THE
TONLE SAP.

14. AS OF JUNE 2ND RICE STOCKS IN PHNOM PENH
TOTALLED APPROXIMATELY 55,000 METRIC TONS (MT) OF
WHICH 10,000 WERE STILL ON BARGES AWAITING DIS-
CHARGE IN THE PHNOM PENH PORT. THIS AMOUNT, TOGETHER
WITH ESTIMATED KOMPONG SOM STOCKS OF APPROXIMATELY
9,000 MT, EQUALS OVER THREE MONTHS SUPPLY AT THE
CURRENT RATE OF DISTRIBUTION, WHICH DURING THE MONTH
OF MAY AVERAGED A RELATIVELY HIGH 710 MTS PER DAY.

MILITARY

15. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ENEMY MILITARY PRESSURE DURING
THE WEEK WAS DIRECTED AT THE FANK GARRISONS AT KOMPONG
SEILA AND DAS KANCHOR ALONG SOUTHERN RT 4. AIR RESUPPLY
OF THE TWO POSITIONS CONTINUED TO BE HAMPERED BY BAD
OF THE TWO POSITIONS CONTINUED TO BE HAMPERED BY BAD
WEATHER. ALTHOUGH FANK DEFENDERS HELD THEIR GROUND WHILE

SUFFERING MODERATE CASUALTIES, ENEMY PRESSURE WAS MOUNTING
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AT WEEK'S END, WITH THE SITUATION AT KOMPONG SEILA BEING OF
PARTICULAR CONCERN.

16. IN THE OUDONG AREA NORTH OF PHNOM PENH FRIENDLY
FORCES ENLARGED THE LOVEK PERIMETER BUT MADE NO MOVE TO
CLEAR AN ACCESS WAY TO THE TONLE SAP RIVER. ALONG RT 5
ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS SOUTH, FANK MADE SOME PROGRESS AGAINST
SUBSTANTIAL RESISTANCE AND ONCE AGAIN THREATENED ENEMY
CONTROL IN THE AREA. THE SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE OF TWO NAVAL
CONVOYS FROM PHNOM PENH TO KOMPONG CHHNANG VIA THE TONLE
SAP LACED EVEN GREATER PRESSURE ON THE ENEMY , WHO HAS REPORTED-
LY STRENGTHENED HIS FORCES IN AN ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN CONTROL.

17. SOUTH OF THE CAPITAL BETWEEN THE BASSAC AND MEKONG
RIVERS ENEMY FORCES SURROUNDED A FANK BATTALION
EARLY IN THE WEEK AND FRIENDLY FORCES SPENT
SEVERAL UNSUCCESSFUL DAYS, TAKING MODERATE CASUALTIES, IN AN
EFFORT TO RELIEVE THE POSITION BEFORE IT WAS EVACUATED NIGHT

OF MAY 31.

AT THE WEEK'S END FANK WAS REINFORCING ITS TROOPS IN AN
ATTEMPT TO CLEAR THE AREA.

18. THE MEKONG EAST BANK JUST NORTH OF PHNOM PENH COIEMNVED
TO RECEIVED NIGHTLY ARTILLERY ATTACK BAND LIGHT GROUND PROBES.
THE CAPITAL CONTINUED TO RECEIVE SPORADIC, LIGHT ROCKET
ATTACKS ORIGINATING FROM BOTH THE SOUTHEAST AND NORTHEAST.
ALONG THE MEKONG SOUTH OF PHNOM PENH ENEMY ACTIVITY PICKED
UP IN PREPARATION FOR THE UP-STREAM MEKONG CONVOY ON JUNE 2.
DESPITE THE INCREASED ACTION, THE CONVOY PASSED WITH LIGHT
DAMAGE AND NO CASUALTIES FROM THREE SEPARATE ABFS.

19. PROVINCIAL CAPITALS KOMPONG THOM AND PREY VENG CONTINUED
TO BE CENTERS OF ENEMY ATTENTION; HOWEVER, FANK STAYED IN
CHARGE OF BOTH SITUATIONS. WHILE ABFS CONSTITUTED THE MA-
JORITY OF THE ENEMY INITIATIVES AT THESE LOCATIONS, FANK
FORCES MOVED OUT AND FORCED COMBAT OUTSIDE THE PERIMETERS.
AT SVAY RIENG THE ENEMY, POSSIBLY INCLUDING SOME VC/NVA
FORCES, LAUNCHED A STRONG ATTACK MAY 29 ON THE EASTERN PERIMETER
AND REGAINED THE SMALL TOWN OF PRASAT. FOLLOWING THE ATTACK
ACTIVITIES DECREASED TO ABFS AND GROUND PROBES.

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 04 JUN 1974
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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